



Peugeot 208

Seductive lines

Review | One thing is immediately obvious: Peugeot wants to seduce. Of all the cars in this segment, the second generation of the 208 has the most pronounced and bold lines. Thereby, like every other new Peugeot, the 208 has a quirky "iCockpit". Upon seeing all that beauty, two questions arise naturally: does the 208 drive as well as it looks and is the 208 a sensible seduction?

The lines speak for themselves, but perhaps not everyone is familiar with the "iCockpit". The iCockpit is characterised by a small steering wheel that pierces deep into the interior, forcing the driver into an active driving position. Because the steering wheel is so small, the clocks are on top of the steering column, making them easier to read than those behind the steering wheel. With this layout, the 208 manages to stand out from the crowd immediately, and as far as Autozine is concerned, this is in a positive sense.



The finish quality and materials used are now of the

same quality as those of Peugeot's larger models. Space remains that of an average compact car: fine in the front and reasonable in the rear. Note that space under the seats is much smaller when opting for electric drive (more on this later).

Equipment and iCockpit

With each new model, Peugeot continues to develop the iCockpit. The dials could previously be replaced by a screen, allowing the driver to choose which information is displayed in which way. For the new 208, that has become two screens one behind the other, the front one being transparent. That way, information can be displayed in two layers. In practice, this is more than a technical feat. The most important information is projected on the top layer and therefore automatically attracts more attention. Warnings thus stand out more, while it takes less effort to distinguish main and minor points.



Even with the rest of the equipment, the 208 convinces as a modern and mature car. The infotainment system (audio, communication and sat nav) requires some getting used to due to its quirky controls (touch-sensitive panels on top of rocker switches) and many animations, but is ultimately powerful and usable. Those who prefer to use their own smartphone as the brain of the car can do so via Apple Carplay and/or Android Auto. Unfortunately, one of the main seducers of Peugeot's larger models has not come to the 208: Focal's ear-pleasing audio system. According to Peugeot, that is too expensive for a car in this segment. What s shame!

In contrast, the 208 does come with all the brand's semi-self-driving features. While other compact cars can only intervene in case of danger, the 208 can make driving easier by steering along and keeping a safe distance from the car in front by itself. In real life, this works fine and does not affect driving pleasure.

Road handling

Thanks to the iCockpit, the 208 is different from other compact cars even before the drive has begun. But the 208 also clearly manages to distinguish itself with its handling. Depending on the chosen trim level, Peugeot opts for a firm or even very firm suspension (GT-Line). Thanks to the small steering wheel, even a slight movement is enough to steer a sharp corner, and this, together with the alert response of the suspension, gives a distinctly lively character. Instead of Peugeot trying to approximate the character of a larger car, the 208 celebrates its agility and dynamism.

With the advent of electric cars, car manufacturers are opting for a variety of solutions when it comes to chassis technology. Some brands develop stand-alone electric models that then also project that they are electric. Peugeot wants to make the choice for electric driving as obvious as the choice between a petrol or diesel engine. That is why the combustion-engine and electric-engine versions are on the same platform. Regardless of the chosen drivetrain, handling is therefore about the same, the influence of engine or battery weight being minor.



Internal combustion engines

For this test, we first drove the base model: the "1.2 PureTech". It is clearly audible and tangible that this is a three-cylinder engine, but this is not disturbing. The power output of 75 hp / 118 Nm is enough to keep up with everyday traffic. Although any reserve is never available, this base engine never has to work hard when commuting and therefore does not feel like an entry-level model. Test consumption on a demanding route came to 4.9 litres per 100 km.

The 1.2-litre three-cylinder is also available with an output of 100 hp / 205 Nm and that gives the car a completely different character. This starts as soon as the clutch is released: as the clutch has a much shorter stroke than that of the 75 hp version, the 100 hp 208 immediately feels more willing. While the entry-level model never lacks power, this more powerful version always has a pleasant reserve on hand. Thanks to a six-speed gearbox, revs are lower at high speeds, increasing comfort and decreasing consumption.

The strongest petrol engine on the price list is the 1.2 PureTech, with an output of 130 hp / 230 Nm. This is mated to an 8-speed automatic as standard, again providing a different character. The top-spec version doesn't feel so much faster, but rather does the same job with more ease. Only when the sport mode is chosen and the accelerator pedal is decisively pressed to the floor, the 130 hp PureTech also convinces as the sportiest version.

Peugeot has not developed a new diesel engine for the 208, but an existing diesel engine has been fitted with new filters and a new tuning to meet the latest emission requirements. In practice, the "1.5 BlueHDi" more than does the job, but it is noticeable that diesel technology is not further developed and is therefore still at the same level as a few years ago.

Peugeot e-208: the electric car

Those configuring a 208 online to order are first asked to choose equipment and options. Only then are they asked for an engine. In this way, Peugeot wants to emphasise that the electrically powered "e-208" is as ordinary as other versions. Apart from a logo, hardly any difference from the other versions can be seen on the outside either.



In practice, the difference between the electric 208 and the combustion engine versions is life-changing, and the e-208 is superior in every way. When driven calmly, the e-208 is so much more comfortable that the other versions of this brand-new car immediately feel like outdated. At the same time, the e-208's performance is many times better than the other versions. In fact, regardless of speed, the e-208 always has a delicious reserve ready to blast away with some supremacy. Moreover, because that performance is delivered in silence, the e-208 feels superior to the "roaring" ones that then deliver less.

According to Peugeot, the e-208 can travel 340 km (WLTP) on a full battery (50 kWh, lithium ion). This is a battery with active cooling and heating to ensure optimum performance, fast charging and the longest possible battery life.

During a test drive, during which the test driver was frequently tempted by the e-208's playful character, consumption came out at 15.9 kWh / 100 km, which means an actual range of 315 km. After that, the e-208 can be recharged via home power socket (16 hours), via a public charge point (8 hours, 3-phase, 11 kW) or via a quick charger (0 to 80% in 30 minutes, 100 kW). Although the purchase price of the e-208 is significantly higher than combustion engine variants, the cost per kilometre is very much lower. If that's not a tempting offer?

Conclusion

Does the new Peugeot 208 drive as well as it looks? Yes, definitely. The second generation of the Peugeot 208 looks playful and dynamic and that is exactly how it drives. Of course, the chosen version makes all the difference in this respect. A 208 with basic engine and basic equipment is a very ordinary compact car, but in a modern guise. When choosing a more powerful engine and richer equipment, performance improves and the sportier suspension provides more dynamics.

Those once tempted by the 208 must then decide whether it is a wise temptation. In all versions and with all engines, the answer to that question is also yes. However, some 208 is more sensible than others. Anyone who first test drives the 208 with combustion engine and then the electric e-208 will immediately write off the first as "outdated technology". The e-208 not only drives better (faster, quieter, more comfortable), but is also cleaner and more economical to run. ■



Specifications

Peugeot 208

Size and weight



Length x width x height	406 x 175 x 143 cm
Wheelbase	254 cm
Kerb weight	1.133 kg
Trailer	615 kg
Trailer - braked	1.200 kg
Fuel capacity	44 l
Luggage space	265/1106 l
Tyre size	205/45R17V

Engine and performance



Capacity	1199 cc
Cylinders / valves	3/4
Max power	130 PS @ 5500 rpm
Max torque	230 Nm @ 1750 rpm
Drive	front wheels
Acceleration 0 - 62 mph	8.7 secs
Top speed	208 km/h
Average mileage	5.4 l / 100 km
Mileage urban	6.7 l / 100 km
Mileage extra urban	4.5 l / 100 km
CO2 emissions	122 gr / km

Price

Price	Â£ 27,290
Price base model	Â£ 20,340